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DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/WE, NEA/IR, AND NEA/ARP (STEVE WALKER)

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SUBJECT: PORTUGUESE STATEMENT WELCOMES NEW U.S. IRAN POLICY

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¶1. As promised in a May 31 conversation with the Ambassador (reftel), Foreign Minister Diogo Freitas do Amaral issued a statement on June 1 strongly endorsing the new U.S. policy on Iran. The Embassy's translation of the statement follows:

The Portuguese Government approves and welcomes the U.S. decision to participate, together with Britain, Germany, and France, in direct talks with Iran, in an attempt to solve the problems caused by the Iranian nuclear program, as soon as Iran suspends its uranium enrichment activities.

As stipulated in the UN Charter, our Government has always advocated, first and foremost, a negotiated solution to the crisis.

With the U.S. working alongside the EU and other major countries, the probability of success and maintenance of peace is greater and gives us more hope.

Portugal appeals to the Islamic Republic of Iran to agree to negotiate and not to retreat into a proudly isolationist policy. Tehran must offer valid and credible guarantees to the international community that its nuclear program has solely peaceful goals and does not hide any latent intentions of a military nature.

The Spokesperson for the Minister of Foreign Affairs recalls that the idea of direct U.S. participation in talks with Iran was explicitly advocated by Foreign Minister Freitas do Amaral, in Parliament, during the plenary debate on May 3. Hoffman